

Summary of Event

On November 17, U.S. Ambassador Michael Owen and the Co-Chairmen of the U.S.-Sierra Leone Chamber of Commerce (USSLCoC), Wilfred Sam-King and Ali Dakhlallah, hosted a reception for the Sierra Leone business community at the residence of the Ambassador. The event was scheduled to complement the Government of Sierra Leone Investment Partnership Forum and also served as the launch of the USSLCoC. The guest of honor was Minister of Trade and Industry, Richard Konteh. Many of the over seventy local, international, and U.S. business leaders who attended the reception said that the gathering was a very encouraging sign of private sector dedication to the prosperity of Sierra Leone.

In his opening remarks, Ambassador Owen gave examples of U.S. government's commitment to further business and trade ties between the U.S. and Sierra Leone and listed the numerous U.S. business companies that have come to Sierra Leone over the past year. He also stressed the importance of not only focusing on bringing new private sector investment to Sierra Leone, but also making distinct efforts to support businesses that have recently arrived. "The most impactful message to persuade foreign businesses to come to Sierra Leone will come from successful businesses that are in Sierra Leone now," Ambassador Owen told the group. In his remarks, Minister Konteh thanked many of the business leaders for their help in the success of the Investment Partnership Forum. He said he was very much encouraged by the enthusiasm of those in the room to invest in Sierra Leone and said he saw the same enthusiasm in his recent visit to the U.S.

USSLCoC Co-Chairman Wilfred Sam-King and Chief Administrator Beatrice Chaytor thanked the U.S. Embassy and the Ministry of Trade and Industry for supporting the USSLCoC which in only eight months has grown to comprise many major companies in Sierra Leone and already made tangible efforts to support trade and investment in Sierra Leone. Among those efforts related to the government's road show visit to the U.S. last month in which the USSLCoC hosted an event with private industry and helped arranged senior level visits for Minister Konteh at the U.S. Department of Commerce.